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PIC/JB-1007/61
February 1961

JOINT PHOTOGRAPHIC INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

UNDERGROUND EXPLOSION SITE NEAR KABYL-SAY, USSR

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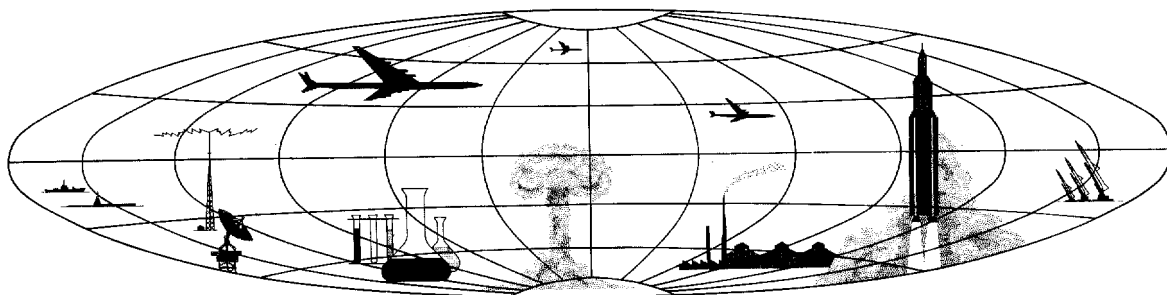


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UNDERGROUND EXPLOSION SITE NEAR KABYL-SAY, USSR

According to Soviet reports, a one-kiloton underground high-explosives experiment was conducted on 19 December 1957 near Kabyl-Say (see Figure 1) a small siding on the Tashkent railroad about 10 nautical miles southeast of Arys', USSR. 1/ 2/ 3/ The coordinates of the site were given as 42-12-15N 69-03-02E. 1/ A seismic event picked up [redacted] at the reported time of the explosion has been positioned in the vicinity of this point. Details of the experiment cited in the reports were that the chamber to contain the explosives was 40 meters underground and large enough to hold a "several-story house." The resulting crater was approximately 200 meters in diameter and 50 meters deep, the reports said.

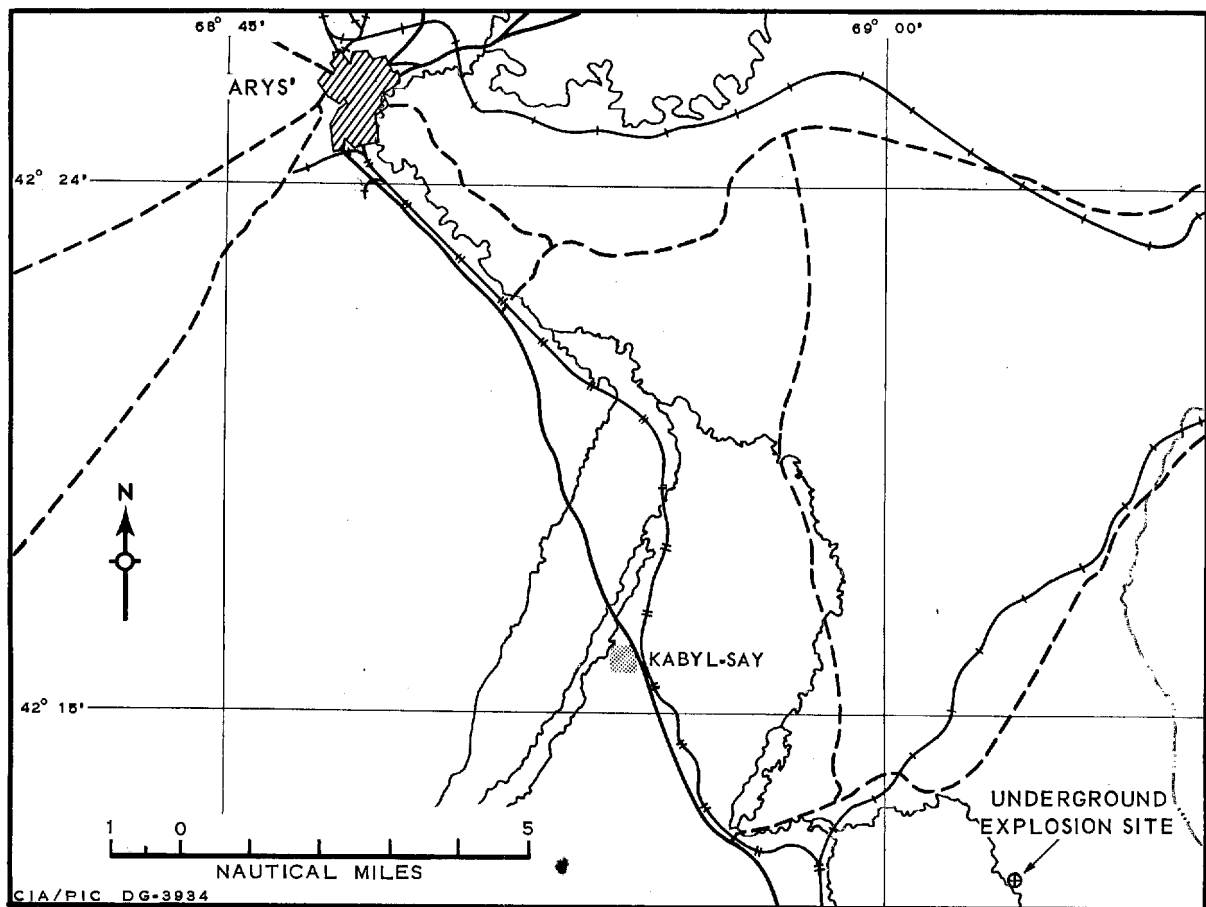
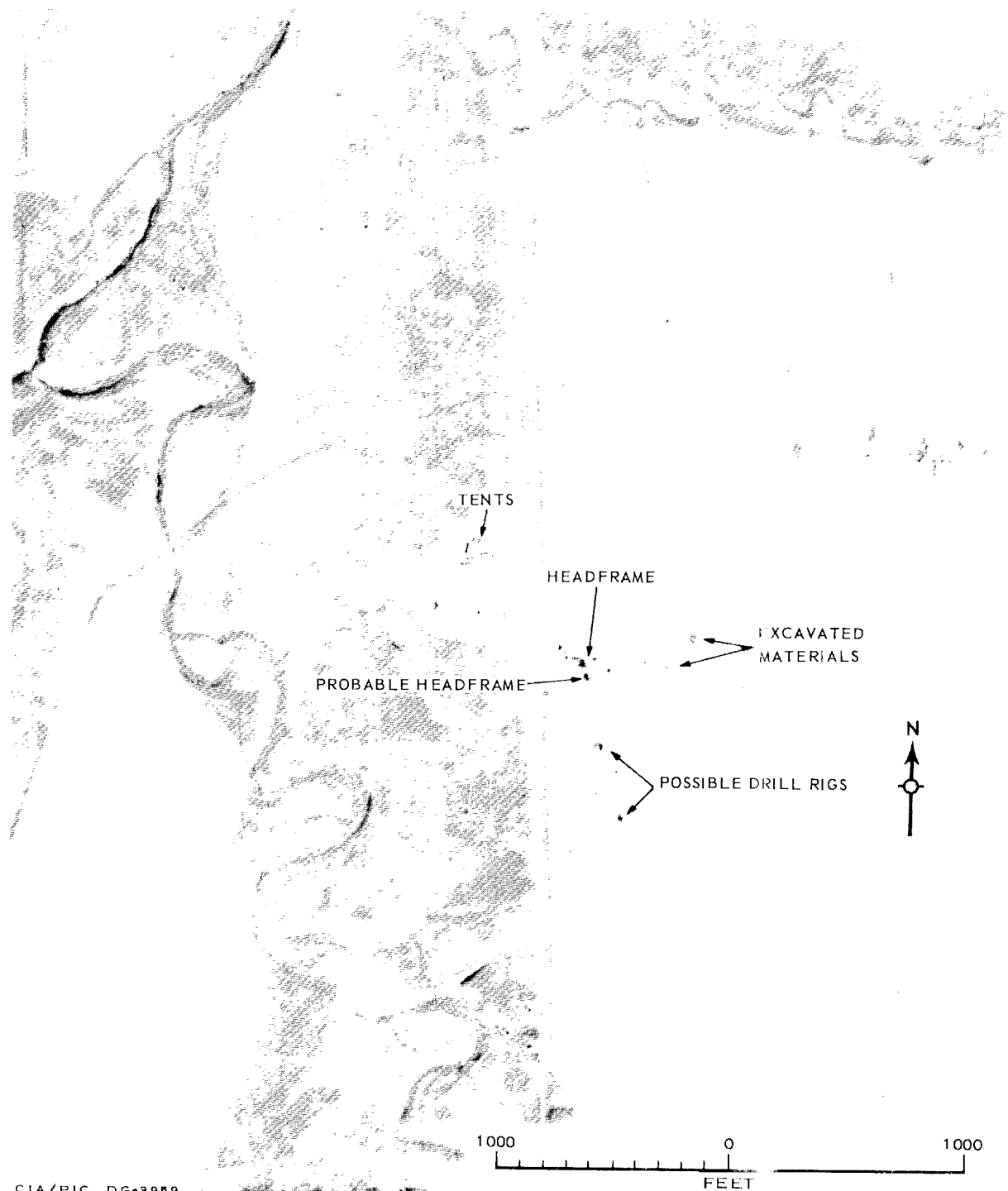


FIGURE 1. MAP SHOWING LOCATION OF UNDERGROUND EXPLOSION SITE.

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FIGURE 2. ACTIVITY AT THE REPORTED SITE OF THE UNDERGROUND EXPLOSION. Photography dated

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Photography of the area taken in [] (Figure 2) approximately 4 months prior to the event, reveals unusual activity at the exact point stated in the Soviet report. 1/ The facilities at the site are divided into two small areas situated about 500 feet apart. Within the westernmost area there are three tents, a building, two possible canvas-covered cargo trailers, and a few other small unidentified objects. The eastern area contains one headframe and one probable headframe, two small piles of excavated materials, two possible drilling rigs, three small shedlike structures, and several smaller pieces of unidentified equipment and/or materials.

The presence of one headframe and one probable headframe and piles of excavated materials indicates the underground chamber was being excavated in the eastern area. The small amount of excavated materials, however, suggests that work on the site was still in its initial stages.

Track activity to two points, one about 6,800 feet to the south and one about 5,600 feet to the southeast of the eastern area, suggests that these two points are connected to operations at the site -- possibly as instrumentation points. One report stated that a large number of sensitive instruments and cameras were set in place about the site before the explosion, but only these two possible instrumentation points were noted on the photography.

The activity at the exact spot indicated by the Soviets and the seismic recording of a disturbance in the vicinity of this site at the time of the reported explosion are positive indications that the explosion did occur at the reported position.

REFERENCES

1. Doklady Akademii Nauk SSSR, Vol. 129, No 6, 1959, p 1283 (U)
2. AIR, USSR. [] Apr 58 (U)
3. "Earthquake or Launching of a Sputnik?" Soviet Union, Illustrated Monthly, No 96, 1958, pp 34-35 (U)

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MAP REFERENCE

SAC. US Air Target Chart, 0328-12AL, 1st ed, Aug 59, scale 1:200,000 (S)